

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**Code No. 001191
Grade 18**

LIBRARY ASSOCIATE

DEFINITION OF CLASS:

This is paraprofessional entry-level library work responding to questions and processing, storing, and circulating information in various physical and electronic formats, such as books, audio tape, VHS, CD-ROM, DVD, etc. Employees in this class may work on the public services desk a large percentage of their work schedule, and may be scheduled to work the Circulation Desk. The main purpose of the work is to provide library services by helping customers locate information and information resources by leading, retrieving, and delivering information resource materials from the library's collection. There is also some programming for targeted audiences. The employee typically works at a public services desk (consolidated or single-service) at a library, but may work in the Ask-a-Librarian function (which involves telephone and electronic communication with customers, including 'live chat' and other social networking media) or in another functional area, such as cataloging. Information services require knowledge of library and community resources and reference services in electronic and print media. The majority of contacts are with customers in person or by telephone to assess needs and provide information. An employee in this class typically provides public service and assistance on a short-term, on-going basis. Service typically involves questioning customers to determine the nature of assistance that is required and deciding how to successfully deliver that assistance as well as providing instructions in the use of library reference and electronic tools. Public service also includes, in working under the direction of senior staff, helping develop or present programs or program modules to various groups and participating in meetings with groups to explain and promote library services.

Under direct supervision and training of senior staff, which may be supplemented by mentoring/coaching by a full performance or senior level professional, an employee in this class provides public services to customers of the library of assignment. Assignments are carried out in accordance with established library practices and procedures. The incumbent uses judgment in locating, selecting, and applying the appropriate guidelines, references, and procedures to specific cases. Deviations in the work and unfamiliar situations not covered by instructions are referred to the supervisor. The complexity of the work is marked by 'active listening' and thoughtful probing to help clarify customer wants/needs, by building the skills necessary for accessing and using public access catalogs, Internet resources and a wide range of online resources, by building the skills necessary for providing the appropriate information and sources to customers clearly, concisely and completely, making a referral to another library or providing service another way, such as placing reserves and recommending specific Inter Library Loan, and by building the skills necessary for planning and preparing programs for children, teens or adults by considering wants/needs, content/manner of presentation and other factors to obtain and maintain audience interest and participation. The impact of properly performed work is realized by customers in effective information services, programming and outreach or by the effectiveness of other work, such as merchandizing, weeding or processing of materials. Some work on branch committees, projects and initiatives may result in system-wide improvements. The employee is trained in the principles, practices, standards, techniques and methods

of paraprofessional librarianship through formal training and on-the-job assignments. Work is typically performed in a library to which the public has unrestricted open access, which includes potential for interpersonal conflict situations and, at times, some potential for aggressive or unpredictable behavior by customers. The work includes light physical effort, such as keyboarding, standing or staying in place for sustained periods and lifting, carrying and/or moving of book tubs, carts and library books and materials. All positions require the employee to work evenings, nights, Saturdays and Sundays based on customer service needs.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES: (Illustrative Only)

- Provides information services, including reader's advisory and reference services, to meet information and reading needs of customers by providing basic research and answering reference questions, directing customers to specific library materials, making referrals to appropriate libraries or other external sources of information and, if possible, facilitating access to such sources.
- Uses public access catalogs and databases to locate material, place reserves and search indices.
- Accesses electronic online databases to locate ready-reference information not otherwise available in library sources.
- Observes, plans and conducts program modules for selected groups, including preschool children, school groups, and customers who are home bound; includes story and picture book hours, book talks, multimedia programs and liaison activities with school and community groups.
- Typically specializes in one or more areas, such as Adults, Teens, Virtual Services, Cataloging and Children's Services which may require some knowledge of adult/child learning theory, early literacy, brain development, English as a Second Language (ESL), etc.
- Participates in collection maintenance.
Prepares library exhibits and displays; identifies items of high potential demand or widespread interest.
- Catalogs materials for inclusion in the collection.
- Processes material for inclusion in the Ask-a-Librarian collection.
- Maintains indexes, files and other records in various manual and/or electronic formats.
- Attends in-service training.
- Stays abreast of changes in MCPL policies and procedures, and technologies used by MCPL.
- Attends meetings and workshops for professional development.
- Prepares graphics for public programs and public displays.
- May be assigned to the joint information/circulation service desk, or the circulation desk.
- Retrieves and enters data and information using computer terminal.
- As assigned, provides library service to specialized populations.
- Troubleshoots elementary branch technology problems to meet the needs of customers, as required for effective customer service. If unable to resolve technology problems, refers them to the appropriate staff member.
- Assists customers in accessing electronic information.
- Merchandises collection.
- May shelve materials when necessary.
- As needed, opens or closes the library, as scheduled, following procedures that apply to opening and closing, such as unlocking doors, etc.
- Performs related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- Ability to build knowledge of, and skills, in information services, programming, outreach and other functions of MCPL while performing the work. This includes knowledge of the principles, practices and standards of library science, including the American Library Association (ALA) Code of Ethics, of functions and methods of information classification systems using bibliographic records, of the primary reference databases of MCPL and other databases, of the collection(s) of the library of assignment, of research methods and search strategies to identify information sources and locate needed information, of the Integrated Library System (especially the functions covering customer accounts and retrieving, delivering and reserving or cataloging library materials) and MCPL policies and procedures (including quality service standards), of specialized MCPL guidelines pertinent to area(s) of assignment (such as the Children's Core Competencies), of the branch work plan, of core bodies of information needed for programming (such as early childhood learning and literacy and adult literacy), and of social networking and electronic methods of information delivery, all to provide information, programming and/or outreach services and perform other functions.
- Knowledge of (or ability to rapidly acquire knowledge of) the library's computers, printers, copiers and other electronic equipment to assist customers. This includes staying abreast of technological changes.
- Knowledge of (or ability to rapidly acquire knowledge of) departmental graphic standards to design compliant signs, handouts, exhibits, displays and promotional materials.
- Knowledge of (or ability to rapidly acquire knowledge of) bodies of information applying to general services or the assigned program area(s), such as knowledge of governmental requirements, assistive technologies and related information applying to public library services for disabled persons to provide services.
- Skill in problem solving to select, organize and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical or abstract) to solve a problem. Examples include building skills in using the reference interview to ascertain customer wants/needs, in selecting appropriate sources of information, in using effective search techniques, and in identifying and presenting critical content of exhibits/displays and informational, educational and promotional materials.
- Skill in written communication to understand written information (including facts, assertions and arguments), and to express information in writing so that others will understand. This includes but is not limited to skill in syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling to prepare signs and promotional materials, in searching for information, and in reading and understanding policies, procedures and standards applying to assignments.
- Skill in oral communication to understand verbal information (including facts, assertions and arguments) and to express such information verbally so that others will understand. This includes skill in encouraging effective oral communication by others, such as customers seeking information services, in listening actively during the reference interview, and in speaking to groups and in programs.
- Interpersonal skills to interact effectively with personal contacts in customer service-oriented, businesslike manner. This includes ability to deal courteously, tactfully and effectively with customers, including, at times, irritated, aggressive or unpredictable people.
- Skill in using a computer, software (including specialized databases) and peripherals for various tasks.
- Ability and willingness to maintain technical and non-technical currency in a fast-changing environment.
- Ability to perform light physical effort.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Experience: None.

Education: Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree.

Equivalency: None.

NOTE: An appointee with only a Bachelor's Degree shall have two (2) years from date of appointment to complete a minimum of ninety (90) hours of in-service training by attending the Maryland State Library Associate Training Program under Departmental sponsorship; or, complete nine (9) hours of formal course work in library science for compliance with the Maryland State Board of Education Bylaw for Public Library Associates.

Physical Ability: Ability to work effectively and calmly under pressure.

LICENSE/CERTIFICATION:

- Employees will be responsible for maintaining appropriate level of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to sustain certification/licensing requirements.

Note: There will be no substitutions for this section.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD:

The probationary period must be six (6) months for a full-time or part-time employee appointed to a merit system position, and six (6) months for a promoted employee, during which time performance will be carefully evaluated. Continuation in this class will be contingent upon successful completion of the probationary period.

MEDICAL EXAM PROTOCOL: Medical History Review.

Class Established: January, 2000

Date Revised: October, 2005

Classification Study: May 2011 (M)

Classification Study: April 2012 (M)
August, 2013
October, 2014